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LETTERS SELECTED FROM THE FERDINAND
J. DREER COLLECTION OF MANUSCRIPTS.

George Washington to Colonel Samuel Miles.

Head Q^{rs} Newburgh
8th July 1782.

Sir,

By the receipt of a M^r White your Assistant

2 Tureens
2 Salled Dishes
29 Dishes of diff' Sizes
5 dozⁿ & 7 Plates—shallow
2 doz. & 10 Soup D^o—&
8 Salts

Were left in his care to be sent to me when ordered; but
in lieu thereof, consequent of the order, I have received
the following.

2 Tureens
8 Dishes
2 Doz & 10 Shallow Plates
3 Doz. & 7 Soup D^o (9 more than were left) &
6 Salts.

The deficiency I expect to receive by the first oppor-
tunity—if they are not already on their way—Only two
Plates were found broken in the Package that came to
hand.

I am Sir
Y^r Most H^{ble} Serv^t
G^o Washington

Col^o Miles

George Washington to Tench Tilghman.

Mount Vernon 17th Aug^t 1785.

Dear Sir,

The Baltimore Advertiser of the 12th Inst^t announces the arrival of a Ship at that Port, immediately from China and by an advertisement in the same Paper, I perceive that the Cargo is to be sold by Public Vendue, on the first of Oct^r next.

At what prices the enumerated articles will sell or the terms proposed can only be known from the experiment; but if the quantity at Market is great, and they should sell as goods have sold by Vendue, bargains may be expected. I therefore take the liberty of requesting the favor of you, in that case, to purchase the several things contained in the enclosed list.

You will readily perceive, My dear Sir, my purchasing or not, depends entirely upon the prices. If *great bargains* are to be had, I would supply myself agreeably to the list. If the prices do not fall *below* a cheap *retail* sale, I would decline them altogether, or take such articles only (if cheaper than common) as are marked in the Margin of the Invoice.

Before October, if none of these goods are previously sold, and if they are the matter will be ascertained thereby, you will be able to form a judgment of the prices they will command, by Vendue. Upon information of which I will deposit the money in your hands to comply with the terms of the Sale.

Since I began this letter I have been informed that good India Nankeens are selling at Dumfries (not far from me) at 7/6 a p^s, this Curr^y. But if my memory has not failed me, I used to import them before the War for about 5/. Ster^g. If so, though 50 p C^t is a small advance upon India Goods, through a British Channel, (with the duties & accumulated charges thereon) yet, quære would not 7/6 be a high price for Nankeens brought immediately from India, exempted from such

duties & Charges? If this is a conjecture founded in fairness, it will give my ideas of the prices of other articles from that Country, & be a government for your conduct therein, at, or before the day appointed for the public Vendue. With the highest esteem and regard

I am—D^r Sir

Y^r Affect^e friend and

Obed^t H^{ble} Serv^t

Tench Tilghman Esq.

G^o Washington

Invoice of Goods to be purchased, by Tench Tilghman Esq^r on Acc^t of George Washington, agreeably to the letter accompanying this, of equal date.

A sett of the best Nankin Table China.

Ditto. best Evening China Cups & Saucers.

*A set of *large* blue & White China

Dishes—say half a dozⁿ more or less.

*1 Dozⁿ *small* bowls—blue & white.

*6 Wash hand Guglets & Basons.

6 large Mugs—or 3 Mugs & 3 Jugs.

A Quart^r Chest, *best* Hyson Tea.

A Leagure of Battavia Arrack

if a Leagure is not large.

*About 13 y^{ds} of good bla: Paduasoy.

*A p^s of fine Muslin—plain.

*1 p^s of Silk Handkerchiefs.

12 p^s of the best Nankeens.

18 p^s of the second quality—or coarsest kind—for servants.

17th Aug^t 1785.

G^o Washington.

George Washington to John Francis Mercer.

Mount Vernon 30th Jan^r 1786.

D^r Sir,

The letter which you dropped for me at Alexandria I have received. If you can make it convenient to lodge the money in the hands of any person at that place, it

* With the badge of the Society of the Cincinnati—if to be had.

would oblige me. I lie quite out of the line of opportunities to Annapolis—and to send there on purpose, would cost me $2\frac{1}{2}$, or perhaps 5 p C^t to fetch it.

If M^r Pine, the Portrait Painter, should still be at Annapolis (which is scarcely to be expected) you would oblige me by paying him Twenty Guineas, and Sixteen dollars; and his receipt for these sums, will be equal to that much of the £200 promised me. If he should have left Annapolis, I will remit the money to him myself.

M^{rs} Washington joins me in compliments to M^{rs} Mercer—We shall always be glad to see you both at this place on your rout to or from Annapolis. My best respects attend M^r Spriggs family.

I am—D^r Sir

Y^r obed^e H^{ble} Serv^t

G^o Washington

George Washington to Edward Rutledge.

(Private)

Philadelphia Dec^r 15th 1790

My dear Sir,

I will make no apology for introducing the bearer, Col^o John Trumbull to your friendship and civilities. You will find him worthy of both.

Y^{rs} Affectionately

Edw^d Rutledge Esq^r

G^o Washington

George Washington to Thomas Johnson.

Philadelphia July 14th 1791.

Dear Sir

Without preface, or apology for propounding the following question to you—at this time—permit me to ask you with frankness, and in the fullness of friendship, whether you will accept of an appointment in the Supreme Judiciary of the United States?

M^r Rutledge's resignation has occasioned a vacancy

therein which I should be glad to see filled by you. Your answer to this question by the Post (which is the most certain mode of conveying letters) as soon as you can make it convenient, will very much oblige

Dear Sir

Your most Obedient &

Affectionate H^{ble} Serv^t

The Hon^{ble}

G^o Washington

Tho^s Johnson Esq^r

George Washington to Col. Burgess Ball.

German Town 24th Nov^r 1793.

Dear Sir,

I have duly received your letter of the 16th Instant, from Leesburgh.

In answer to which, respecting the purchase of Buck Wheat, I send you a Bank note for two hundred dollars; being more disposed to give two & six pence p^r Bushel in Loudoun than depend upon the purchase here, the uncertainty of getting it round in time. What the Waggonage of it to my house from thence (as fast as it is bought, for that I make a condition, in order that *no disappointment* may happen) will be, I know not; but with a view to place the matter upon an *absolute certainty* I had rather give three & six pence for it, delivered at Mount Vernon, than encounter delay, or trust to contingencies; because, as it forms part of my system of Husbandry for the next year, a derangement of it would be a serious thing; for which reason, a small difference in the price can be no object when placed against the disconcertion of my plans: especially too, as I am persuaded you will purchase, & transport the B Wh^t for me on the best terms you can.

Four hundred & fifty bushels, or call it 500, is the quantity I shall want; and more money shall be sent to you as soon as I know your prospects, and the expenditures of what is now forwarded. For the reason I

have already assigned, I must encounter *no disappointment*; if therefore your prospects (as you proceed in this business) are not so flattering as those detailed in your letter, inform me of it in time, that I may supply my self from hence before the frost sets in.

The malady with which Philadelp^a has been sorely afflicted has, it is said, entirely ceased; and all the Citizens are returning to their old habitations again. I took a house in this town when I first arrived here, & shall retain it until Congress get themselves fixed; altho I spend part of my time in the City.

Give my love to M^{rs} Ball & Milly and be assured of the sincere esteem and regard with which I am,

Dear Sir

Your Affect^e Serv^t

Col^o B. Ball

G^o Washington

George Washington to David Stuart.

Mount Vernon 13th Aug^t 1798.

Dear Sir,

If you, or M^{rs} Stuart could, by indirect means, discover the State of Washington Custis' mind, it would be to be wished. He appears to me to be moped & stupid—says nothing—and is always in some hole or corner excluded from Company. Before he left Annapolis, he wrote to me desiring to know whether he was to return there, or not, that he might pack up accordingly. I answered, that I was astonished at the question! and that it appeared to me that nothing that could be said to him had the least effect, or left an impression beyond the moment. Whether this, by thwarting his views, is the cause of his present behaviour, I know not. Enclosed his letter & my answer, to be returned when read. We are as usual; and unite in best regards for you M^{rs} Stuart and the family.

I am—Dear Sir

Y^r Obed^t & affect^e

David Stuart Esq^r

G^o Washington.

General Nathaniel Greene to Major Kearse.

Westpoint July 28th 1779.

Sir

I am informed a large Magazine is forming at Pompton. This is expressly contrary to General Washingtons orders as it lies expos'd to a sudden movement of the Enemy. You will therefore exert your self to get it on to Mr Holts as fast as it arrives at Pompton, and if you cannot get it on as fast as it comes forward to that place, write to Morris to Mr Lewis not to hasten it on any faster than it can be got forward to the Mouth of the Clove. Let me hear from you on this subject as soon as possible.

I am sir

Your

humble ser^t

Major Kearse

Nath Greene

A.D.Q.M.G.

Q.M.G.

Suffrans Tavern

*General Nathaniel Greene to Governor
Thomas Jefferson.*

N^o C. High Rockford Feb^y 29th 1781.

Sir

I had the honor of receiving a Letter from your Excellency by Major Maggill, dated the th, ins^t. It would give me satisfaction to furnish the Gentleman with such intelligence as might be interesting to you, but there is such a necessity for secrecy to forward the operations of an Army that it will be utterly impossible to furnish him with facts in time to make them important. Should any thing turn up at any time, that immediately concerns the policy of Virginia I shall do myself the honor to write to you, or send it through the chanel of Major Maggill as circumstances may be.

We have had an active and difficult campaign so far,

but it has been, as yet, greatly to our advantage. The Enemy have suffered in several little skirmishes, and I do not know that we have met with one disaster. On the Night of the 24th Col^o McCall surprised a Subalterns Guard at Harts Mill, killed 8 and wounded and took 9 Prisoners. On the 25th Gen^l Pickens and Lieut. Col^o Lee routed a Body of near 300 Tories on the Haw River, who were in Arms to join the British Army. They made a most dreadful carnage of them; upwards of 100 were killed, and most of the rest cut to pieces. It has had a very happy effect on those disaffected Persons, of which there are too many in this Country.

I must now take this opportunity of reminding your Excellency of the Cloathing which that part of the Virginia Line that is out here, have been in long expectation of. Many of them are so ragged that it is painful to exact common duty of them. Even those of the last detachment who had short Jackets given them are in a distressed situation, from the Jackets being made so bad. The Shoulders of them were not lyned, and the rubbing of the Musquet has worn them to pieces. I trust your Excellency will make use of every means to furnish them as soon as possible. You cannot be a stranger to the necessity of Troops being well clad to do the necessary duties of Camp.

I have the honor to be with great respect

Your mo: ob^t h^{ble} serv^t

Governor Jefferson

Nath Greene

General Nathaniel Greene to Governor Thomas Nelson.

Head Quarters, high Hills of Santee

July 18th 1781.

Sir

I beg leave to congratulate your Excellency upon your late appointment, which reflects the highest honor upon you as it affords a full display of the confidence

of the People in your abilities, zeal, and integrity from their having turned their attention to you alone in the hour of common danger. I have not the honor of your acquaintance, but I beg you to be persuaded that I have the highest respect for your character. It must be confessed you have an arduous task, but I flatter myself you have resources equal to the undertaking.

In civil government it very often happens that the People cannot be brought into measures necessary to promote their true interest, untill they are convinced by suffering. The late misfortunes in Virginia I hope will be improved to bring them into measures necessary for their better security. The public calamities have been sometimes encreased from improper jealousies and distrusts between the civil and Military. In contemplating your character it affords me peculiar satisfaction that both the Citizen and Soldier are happily united in it; and that you will be no less attentive to one than to the other, which alone can give permanent support to both. The very great respect I have for civil government, and the high estimation I hold the rights of a Citizen, I persuade myself will forever preserve me from any improper conduct respecting either; and where the contrary seems to appear the public safety will be found to be the object of the measure.

The early attention I paid to Virginia in procuring the return of the Marquis de la Fayette, and the force I left under his command I hope will convince your State that I made them the first object of my attention. It is true their sufferings have been considerable, but I flatter myself it will appear to have been unavoidable. The appointment and conduct of the Marquis de la Fayette I persuade myself cannot but meet with your warmest approbation, as it is evident he has done much more than could have been expected from his little force in a Country, the Geography of which was so much against him.

The weak state of your Line in this quarter and the late European intelligence, added to the probable measures the Enemy will take in consequence thereof, render it absolutely necessary that you fill your ranks as soon as possible. As the struggle increases here, necessity will oblige me to call reinforcements from the Northward, and I hope you will be prepared to afford them. I shall transmit you a state of your Line here as soon as possible, that you may have the clearest evidence to lay before the Assembly, to convince them how far short they are of their proportion of Men in the field necessary for the common defence.

I wrote to Governor Jefferson an account of the raising the siege of Ninety Six, and the cause thereof. Since which we have obliged the Enemy to evacuate it, and they are now at Orangeburg. Our distress and sufferings can only be realised by those who have equal difficulties to encounter, and equal hardships to endure. Support the Army and that will support government, but without be assured all will fall together.

I have the honor to be with the greatest respect

Your Excellencys

most obedient and

most humble serv^t

His Excel^y

Nath Greene

Governor Nelson

General Edward Hand to Richard Henry Lee, Richard Law and Daniel Roberdeau.

Fort Pitt 21st dec^r 1777.

Gent^l

Before the arrival of your favour of the 24th Oct^r— I had gone from this place to Fort Randolph, from whence I did not return untill Yesterday, which prevented my complying with your order sooner. The report of Col. George Morgan's being arrested here

was well founded,—the Express (a Militia Officer) who brought the enclosed Letter from Col. Zack Morgan informed some of his Acquaintance in Town, that the principal People here concerned in the Conspiracy, were Col. Geo. Morgan, Col. John Campbell, Capt. Alex^r M^cKee & Simon Girty, and that the Reason they were not pointed out in the Letter was, that, I was myself suspected. From this Information I judged it prudent to secure these Persons to prevent their escaping the Punishment they deserved, if Guilty, and to repair myself to where Col. Zack. Morgan was, to sift the affair to the Bottom. Col. Campbell before he had learned my Intention of arresting him, waited on me, and desired Permission to accompany me, which I agreed to, & told Col. George Morgan he might have the same Liberty, which he declined, being then, he said very busie, and remained a Prisoner in his own House. Capt. M^cKee was sent for to his Farm House & confined in the same Place, and Simon Girty to the Common Guard House. I was present at the Examination of the greatest Number of the Prisoners, and learned from the Magistrates who examined the whole, that no more than one Man mentioned Col. George Morgan's Name, his Expression was, that he allowed him to be their party, some few of them mentioned Girty's Name, but none of them either Col. Campbell's or Capt. M^cKee's, for this Reason on my Return I took off Col. Morgan's Arrest,—Simon Girty was examined before a Civil Magistrate and acquitted, & Capt. M^cKee I put on a new parole, after obtaining the old one from the Co^{ty} Court. His Parole I have enclosed to the Board of War, and wait the Direction of Congress as to his future Residence. The remarks made in the enclosed Letter by Capt. Arbuckle, on M^cKee's Conduct, tho' coming (in my opinion) from a bad Author, knowing her to have an implacable Hatred to the Woman who

lived with M^cKee, may yet have some weight with Congress. The same Person was at Fort Randolph, when I left it the 21st ult^o. She assured me that M^cKee had written Letters to Detroit. I mention these Circumstances to your Honble Committee, as I think them applicable to the present Subject, & by that you may also communicate them to Congress. Col. Geo. Morgan left the place in a few days after my first Arrival here, & did not return untill about the 25th of July, he staid untill the Beginning of Oct^r since when he has been absent. I recollect that the day after he arrived here, in July he told me, he would cross the River to talk with the Indians then waiting to see him, & probably not return that Night. As I had confined the day or two before two Indians, I judged it unsafe, and advised him against it, but he still persisted, early next Morning I understood he lay at Capt. McKees, on his Return told him what I heard, he said it was so, & that he had a Conference with the Shawanee Indians, who was his Interpreter I don't know, Certain it is, that he can't discourse in that or any other Indian Language. Except this part his Conduct may be found exceptionable. I must declare in Justice to him, that every Proceeding of his, that came to my Knowledge, either as Indian Agent, or Commissary, appeared to me, to be that of a Zealous and faithful Serv^t to the United States. I should have made early mention of his Arrest, but as it is on a groundless Assertion, I wished to have it buried in Oblivion.

I am Gent^m

With much Respect

Y^r most Obed^t Hble Serv^t

Edw^d Hand.

To The Honble
Rich^d Henry Lee
Rich^d Law & Dan^l
Roberdeau Esq^{rs} }

General William Heath to Governor John Hancock.

Headquarters, Continental village,
October 24, 1781.

Sir,

I have this moment received a letter from head quarters in Virginia, dated the 12th instant, from which I give you the following particulars, viz.—That on the 6th instant the trenches were opened and the approaches carried within 600 yards of the enemy's works without being discovered until day light, and without loss. The 7th and 8th were employed in erecting batteries. On the 9th two batteries, one on the right and the other on the left were opened. The next morning four others being completed, the whole opened a heavy fire of cannon and mortars, which soon became so warm as to drive the enemy from their guns. Their fire was almost totally silenced, and very little return made afterwards.

The Charron of 44 guns, with one transport, took fire from our shot or shells the evening of the 10th and were both consumed. The 11th another ship was destroyed in the same manner.

On the night of the 11th the second paralel was advanced within less than 400 yards of the enemy's lines. This approach was also effected without annoyance, and the morning of the 12th the fatigue men were securely covered while they were completing their work.

The foregoing is from the *best* authority.

This moment we have a report that Lord Cornwallis surrendered with his whole army on the 17th. This is said to have come to the governor of Maryland from the count de Grasse who, the report says, had taken all his troops on board, and had gone to sea to meet Admiral Digby—who with twenty-five sail of the line, two or three 50 and two or three of 40 guns, twelve frigates and several fire-ships, with sir Henry Clinton with four or five thousand picked troops, left Sandy

hook the afternoon of the 19th. We impatiently wait a confirmation of this momentous news, and also to hear of a decisive naval engagement.

I have the honor to be

With the highest respect,

Your Excellency's

Most obedient servant

W. Heath

His Excellency Governor Hancock.